7 November 2013 - The Met Office is set to be a significant partner organisation in a £100 million scheme to provide specialised training for more than a thousand environmental science PhD students.

NERC , the UK's main agency for funding and managing research and training in environmental sciences, announced funding for its new Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) this week.

The DTPs will support 1200 PhD students across 15 partnerships, with at least 240 new students commencing their studies every year for five years.

The DTPs include collaborations between 38 UK higher education institutions and 280 partner organisations, including businesses, policy-makers, and public and third sector organisations.

The Met Office is delighted to be involved in eight of the fifteen DTPs, which include the universities in the Met Office Academic Partnership and beyond and reflects the growing collaboration between the Met Office and UK academia. The Met Office will offer to engage in the DTPs by proposing research topics and engaging in the joint supervision of students, by offering on-the-job career development opportunities and providing direct training.

Professor Julia Slingo, Chief Scientist at the Met Office, said: "Forecasting the weather and predicting the future of our climate are prime examples of the demanding scientific challenges we face today. Collaborative working to share knowledge and expertise across institutes is vital to rise to these challenges, so it's fitting that this new scheme aimed at training the science leaders of tomorrow has partnership working at its core.

"We're proud to be involved in this scheme so that we can share our world class science and expertise with the next generation, and provide an environment where students can appreciate the relevance and impact of their research."

The strong focus on collaboration within and between the DTPs allows partners to pool their experience to create rich training environments for their students and encourage knowledge-sharing and interconnectivity, which benefits environmental science researchers.

Professor Duncan Wingham, chief executive of NERC, said, "If UK environmental sciences are going to continue to prosper, we need to make sure we get the best from our students. These DTPs position us to compete in an increasingly competitive global environment by training students in the best possible way to use environmental sciences to help meet the challenges and opportunities facing us today.

"We want to provide these students with the skillsets and experiences to equip them to become future scientific leaders, and sustain the flow of top talent and skilled people for UK research, business and government. Encouraging collaboration between academic institutions and partners across the environmental sciences sector when delivering training for every student will help achieve this."

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